

Distinguished members of the Health Appropriations Subcommittee:

My name is Jacqueline Levin; I live in Fairfield, CT. I am a supporter of CT Against Gun Violence, MOMs Demand and Everytown for Fun Safety but most importantly I am a concerned mother.

I am testifying in support of the \$2.5 million included in the Governor's budget on Line T1449 for the Department of Public Health to fund gun violence intervention grants in FY2024, and the \$400,000 on Line 274 for operational expenses each year in FY2024 and FY2025.

But given the magnitude of the crisis of gun violence, especially in Connecticut's urban centers, I believe the grant appropriation needs to be larger, at \$10 million in each year of the fiscal 2024-25 budget.

Black and Hispanic children are routinely exposed to gun violence—they witness shootings, hear gunshots, and too often know friends, relatives and family members who have been shot or killed. Exposure to violence during childhood can change brain development and has immediately harmful effects, especially related to learning. These adverse childhood experiences are also linked to lifelong consequences including chronic health problems, mental illness, substance abuse, increased likelihood of criminal behavior, difficulty forming healthy relationships and having stable employment. Beyond the human cost of lives lost and forever changed, exposure to violence has devastating economic consequences, driving societal costs estimated at \$1 billion annually in Connecticut.

Thank you very much for hearing my testimony.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Levin
Fairfield, CT